

## **Remarks of Lt. Governor Becky Skillman at the 2010 Leadership Prayer Breakfast February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010**

The Bible tells us that Jesus rose very early, while it was still dark, and went off alone to pray (Mark 1:35). I realize we're following his example to some extent this morning. But, I'm just as glad to have my prayers supported by good coffee and good company!

Thank you so much for being here today. I'm proud to be here to pray with you all this morning as we take a much-needed pause from the busyness that consumes most of us this time of year.

This prayer breakfast brings us all to common ground. It's a time when leaders of all persuasions and Hoosiers of all faiths can meet and agree on one important thing: that there is, in fact, someone greater than us all, someone who is in control, someone who established the very governments we serve and even put us in our positions to be stewards. We serve at his good pleasure, and we need his providence and wisdom now more than ever.

I'm frequently humbled by the notes and comments I receive from Hoosiers who make it a point to pray for leaders in every level of government – myself included. It's comforting to know there is unseen support holding our communities – and the Statehouse – together.

The Book of James tells us that the prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Whether you are praying for wisdom in our leaders, blessings for our cities and towns or simply for God's will to be done, those prayers are absolutely essential to the health and welfare of our state.

Hoosiers who pray are examples to us all. Their faith spurs us on to good works and encourages us. In times of discouragement or frustration, prayer is a comfort and a relief. In times of joy and celebration, it's an important reminder of God's mercy and grace. It's good to humble ourselves, and its freeing to lay our problems at the feet of one much more capable than ourselves.

We know prayer changes things – it changes us when we do it. It connects us to God, to the ultimate source of good and good works. And in my experience, people who are in the habit of praying are also usually in the habit of doing. I believe the countless acts of compassion and service I witness from Hoosiers every year are often the result of God's gentle – or not so gentle – nudge in the right direction.

I have had the difficult privilege of standing with Hoosiers all over the state as they have lived through devastating tragedies, from floods to tornadoes, and lost homes to the consequences of war, and lost loved ones. Even in their suffering, there are Hoosiers who hold fast to the promise that all things work together for good for those who love the Lord. Their faith, strength and compassion quietly shut the mouths that are filled with complaint, anger and despair.

Time and time again, as I've traveled to support Hoosiers in their times of need, I have been the one blessed. God's people have a way of coming out of the woodwork when there is a real need

and want. They just fall into work beside their friends and neighbors, silently serving with the hands and feet of Christ. What an example they are to us.

That's why I'm confident that the difficult days we're living through right now will one day make sense. I have faith in the Providence that has carried us this far and will continue to bless us.

I have faith that God is not through with Indiana yet, and that he has a tender and loving hold on the hearts of our people. And as we pray – for our government, for our leaders and for each other – we can rest easy in the soft, sovereignty of a loving God. He sends trials not to punish but to perfect.

Now, we're going to hear from a woman who has experienced many trials in her own life. I believe she can testify to the power of prayer, and the power of good decisions. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois and Harvard Law School. She is a woman dedicated to the well being and health of our young people, and – oh yes, she also served as Miss America. She is a real role model for young women across the country, beautiful both inside and out, with a passion to connect young people and protect them from violence.

Please join me in welcoming Miss America 2003, Miss Erika Harold.